

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL WINNIPEG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 778
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

UNCLAS WINNIPEG 141

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y-MRN 141 VICE 2888

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, CA
SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION TO TRUDEAU SPEECH IN WINNIPEG

REF: WINNIPEG S 137

1. PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU'S WINNIPEG SPEECH TOPPED ALL NEWS IN WINNIPEG'S DAILIES. THE TRIBUNE HEADLINED: "TOLERATE OR PERISH: PM". NEVER AN ADMIRER OF THE PM, THE TRIB EDITORIAL CALL HIS SPEECH "TOO MUCH LECTURE, NOT ENOUGH MEAT". OVERCOMING A NATURAL TENDENCY NOT TO CRITICIZE A PRIME MINISTER AT A TIME OF CRISIS, TRIB SAID SPEECH WAS "WELL-INTENTIONED, WELL-DELIVERED, BUT DISAPPOINTING". ALTHOUGH PM PASSIONATELY BELIEVES IN THE SAVING OF CANADA, EDITORIAL CRITICIZED HIS SPEECH FOR LACKING PASSION. "HIS AUDIENCE WAS LOOKING FOR LEADERSHIP, AND HE FAILED TO DELIVER." CLAIMING TRUDEAU UNDERESTIMATES THE CANADIAN PEOPLE IN THEIR LOVE AND CARING FOR THEIR COUNTRY, TRIB CONCLUDES THAT "WE, THE CITIZENS OF THIS PLACE, NEED LEADERSHIP, NOT LECTURES".

2. WINNIPEG FREE PRESS TITLED ITS THREE-COLUMN LEAD "2
"WEST, QUEBEC CAN GUARANTEE UNITED CANADA -- TRUDEAU APPEALS FOR
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UNDERSTANDING".

3. IN A DEPARTURE FROM USUAL PRACTICE, FREE PRESS (PRO-LIBERAL)
AND MODERATELY SYMPATHETIC TOWARD PM) CARRIED A SIGNED EDITORIAL
BY FRED CLEVERLEY WHICH TOOK APART THE TRUDEAU SPEECH BIT BY BIT.
IT QUESTIONED WHETHER THE PM "WAS MAKING HIS OWN SPEECH, OR
MOUTHING THE WORDS OF HIS EASTERN-ORIENTED RESEARCH STAFF".

THE WRITER REPORTED THAT A -WINNIPEG CBC EMPLOYEE SEEING AN ADVANCE COPY OF PM'S SPEECH, WISHED OUT LOUD THAT THE CORPORATION HAD ENOUGH FORTITUDE TO CANCEL THE BROADCAST".

4. COMMENTING ON PM'S REPENTANCE FOR THE TERM "BILINGUALISM", EDITORIAL SAID PM "LEFT THE IMPRESSION THAT THE WORD, BUT NOT THE PROGRAM, WOULD BE CHANGED". MAIN CRITICISM OF EDITORIAL THOUGH WAS THAT TRUDEAU DOES NOT REALLY UNDERSTAND THE WEST. THE WRITER CITED A PREVIOUS VISIT WHEN THE PM HAD ASKED A WINNIPEG AUDIENCE WHY THEY SHOULD EXPECT HIM TO SELL WHEAT. (THE ANSWER WAS THAT AT THAT TIME HE HAD TO SELL IT BECAUSE FEDERAL LAW SAID HE HAD TO SELL IT.) ON THIS VISIT, PM HAD SYMPATHIZED WITH WHEAT GROWERS FOR LACK OF WINTER SNOWFALL. EDITORIAL GOES ON TO CRITICIZE TRUDEAU AND HIS RESEARCH STAFF FOR NOT REALIZING THAT WINTER SNOWFALL CONTRIBUTES VERY LITTLE TO A SUCCESSFUL WHEAT CROP.

5. EDITORIAL CONCLUDES: "MR. TRUDEAU WAS CLEARLY ATTEMPTING TO WOO THE WEST, WHICH HAS NOT PRODUCED A REASONABLE CROP OF LIBERAL MEMBERS IN HIS MEMORY. BUT HIS SONG WRITERS ARE NOT QUITE SURE OF THE TUNE THEY SHOULD BE PLAYING TO GO ALONE WITH THE APPROPRIATE WORDS."

6. COMMENT: REACTION WE HAVE SAMPLED HERE INDICATES THAT SPEECH MAY NOT HAVE BEEN A BOMB, BUT WAS PROBABLY A FLOP. NOBODY SEEMED TO LIKE IT. FEW PEOPLE TOOK NOTE OF THE FACT THAT THE PM HAD NOT BEEN IN WINNIPEG FOR MORE THAN A YEAR. AND NO ONE SEEMED TO BE ASKING HIM TO HURRY BACK SOON.
HUTSON

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